

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is crafting a new surface transportation bill to replace the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which expires on September 30, 2009. I chair the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, which has principal responsibility for drafting the new legislation.

This legislation is a six-year bill that authorizes our nation's surface transportation programs. The majority of the federal funds in the bill will be allocated by formula with the state departments of transportation, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and local transit agencies determining which projects will be funded. Although the current federal-state-local partnership has served highway and transit systems well, not all communities are treated equally in the decision making process.

To complement the work done by these agencies, and to ensure communities are full partners in these important programs, a small percentage of the overall investment of the authorization bill will be available for Member-designated High Priority Projects. To ensure the transportation needs of Oregon's 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District are addressed with the investment provided in the authorization legislation, my office accepted requests for High Priority Projects.

I received fifty-five local requests for federal funding, and I reviewed those requests by considering if the project is a valuable use of taxpayer funds, if it meets 4<sup>th</sup> District needs and priorities, if it is prepared to use federal funding effectively, and if it is eligible to receive funding under existing surface transportation programs. After making those considerations, I asked the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to provide federal funding for thirty-four High Priority Projects.

To ensure transparency and accountability for High Priority Projects, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee established the following principles:

- Members are required to certify that neither the Member nor his or her spouse has any financial interest in a requested project;
- Members are required to post requests for projects on their website;
- The Committee will give the U.S. Department of Transportation at least 20 days to review all project requests to ensure they meet program eligibility criteria;
- A list of all Member-designated Surface Transportation High Priority Projects that are included in the bill will be posted on the Committee website; and,
- A copy of all Member financial interest certifications for High Priority Projects included in the bill will be posted on the Committee website.

[You can access a full list of my requests for High Priority Projects by clicking on this sentence.](#)

The requests are organized by alphabetical order. These projects will modernize local roads, bridges, and transit systems, and improve public safety.

It is important for Congress to fund needed projects in a fiscally responsible way. The reforms implemented by the Democratically-controlled Congress to the earmark process will help this cause immensely. I will continue to advocate for full transparency, accountability, and restraint for congressional earmarks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pat Allen". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "P" and "A", and the last name "Allen" is written in a more cursive, flowing script.

Member of Congress